

HOUSE BILL NO. 643

INTRODUCED BY T. FUREY

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT APPROPRIATING FUNDS TO ALLOW COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICES OR SEARCH AND RESCUE UNITS TO ESTABLISH PROGRAMS TO ASSIST IN SEARCH AND RESCUE EFFORTS INVOLVING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

WHEREAS, some of Montana's most vulnerable individuals are those who have a developmental disability or a disease such as dementia or Alzheimer's disease; and

WHEREAS, some of these vulnerable individuals may wander from their homes or from caregivers; and

WHEREAS, because of their disability or disease, these individuals may be less able to seek assistance or find their residences on their own.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Appropriation to assist local agencies with establishing programs to aid in search and rescue. (1) There is appropriated \$196,000 from the general fund to the department of public health and human services for the biennium beginning July 1, 2009, for grants to counties for use by a county sheriff's office or a search and rescue unit established pursuant to 7-32-235. The money must be used to establish a program to assist with search and rescue efforts for individuals who are known to or are likely to wander from their caregivers, including but not limited to individuals with developmental disabilities, autism, dementia, or Alzheimer's disease.

(2) A county governing body that applies for funds from the department shall receive \$3,500 to pay for the initial costs of establishing the program provided for in subsection (1), including but not limited to the costs of:

(a) initial membership fees for an organization that offers search and rescue equipment and training in searching for individuals who may wander from their caregivers;

(b) purchasing necessary equipment; and

(c) training personnel in the use of the equipment.

(3) A county governing body may receive the funds only if the governing body signs an agreement with

1 the department stating that the county will:

2 (a) continue the program for 5 years from the time the state funds are received;

3 (b) use the program to serve individuals who have been diagnosed with a developmental disability,
4 autism, dementia, or Alzheimer's disease or who are known to wander from caregivers; and

5 (c) contract with an entity that is able to provide the equipment and training needed to establish the
6 program; or

7 (d) purchase, operate, and maintain the equipment needed to establish the program and provide training
8 to personnel who will use the equipment.

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10 NEW SECTION. **Section 2. Effective date.** [This act] is effective July 1, 2009.

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